

In the United States Court of Federal Claims

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 16-0470V

Filed: September 16, 2016

UNPUBLISHED

REBECCA S. MELGARES,

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Petitioner,

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v.

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SECRETARY OF HEALTH

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AND HUMAN SERVICES,

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Respondent.

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Joseph Michael Russell, Von Briesen & Roper, S.C., Milwaukee, WI, for petitioner.

Voris Edward Johnson, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for respondent.

DECISION AWARDING DAMAGES¹

Dorsey, Chief Special Master:

On April 13, 2016, Rebecca S. Melgares (“petitioner”) filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*,² (the “Vaccine Act”). Petitioner alleged that she suffered from a shoulder injury related to an influenza (“flu”) vaccine she received on October 20, 2014. Petition at 1; Stipulation, filed September 16, 2016, at ¶ 2, 4. Petitioner further alleged that she experienced the residual effects of her injury for more than six months. Petition at 18; Stipulation at ¶ 5. The case was assigned to the Special Processing Unit of the Office of Special Masters.

On May 19, 2016, a ruling on entitlement was issued, finding petitioner entitled to compensation for SIRVA. On September 16, 2016, respondent filed a joint stipulation by the parties stipulation that petitioner should be awarded \$148,363.83. Stipulation at

¹ Because this unpublished decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action in this case, the undersigned intends to post it on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2012) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, the undersigned agrees that the identified material fits within this definition, the undersigned will redact such material from public access.

² National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all “§” references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2012).

¶ 9. Based on the record as a whole, the undersigned finds that petitioner is entitled to an award as stated in the stipulation.

Pursuant to the terms stated in the attached stipulation, the undersigned awards petitioner a lump sum payment of \$148,363.83, in the form of a check payable to petitioner. Stipulation at ¶ 9. This amount represents compensation for all items of damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a). *Id.*

The undersigned approves the requested amount for petitioner's compensation. In the absence of a motion for review filed pursuant to RCFC Appendix B, the clerk of the court is directed to enter judgment in accordance with this decision.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Nora Beth Dorsey
Nora Beth Dorsey
Chief Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), entry of judgment can be expedited by the parties' joint filing of notice renouncing the right to seek review.

8. Accordingly, petitioner is entitled to compensation under the terms of the Vaccine Act for her SIRVA. Therefore, a decision should be entered awarding the compensation described in Paragraph 9 of this stipulation.

9. As soon as practicable after an entry of judgment reflecting a decision consistent with the terms of this Stipulation, and after petitioner has filed an election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services will issue a lump sum payment of \$148,363.83 in the form of a check payable to petitioner. This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a).

10. As soon as practicable after the entry of judgment on entitlement in this case, and after petitioner has filed both a proper and timely election to receive compensation pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-21(a)(1), and an application, the parties will submit to further proceedings before the special master to award reasonable attorneys' fees and costs incurred in proceeding upon this petition.

11. Petitioner and her attorney represent that they have identified to respondent all known sources of payment for items or services for which the Program is not primarily liable under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g), including State compensation programs, insurance policies, Federal or State health benefits programs (other than Title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 1396 et seq.)), or entities that provide health services on a pre-paid basis.

12. Payments made pursuant to paragraph 9 and any amounts awarded pursuant to paragraph 10 of this Stipulation will be made in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(i), subject to the availability of sufficient statutory funds.

13. The parties and their attorneys further agree and stipulate that, except for any award for attorney's fees and litigation costs, and past unreimbursable expenses, the money provided

pursuant to this Stipulation will be used solely for the benefit of petitioner as contemplated by a strict construction of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a) and (d), and subject to the conditions of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(g) and (h).

14. In return for the payments described in paragraphs 9 and 10, petitioner, in her individual capacity, and on behalf of her heirs, executors, administrators, successors and/or assigns, does forever irrevocably and unconditionally release, acquit and discharge the United States and the Secretary of Health and Human Services from any and all actions or causes of action (including agreements, judgments, claims, damages, loss of services, expenses and all demands of whatever kind or nature) that have been brought, could have been brought, or could be timely brought in the Court of Federal Claims, under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-10 et seq., on account of, or in any way growing out of, any and all known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected personal injuries to or death of petitioner resulting from, or alleged to have resulted from, the flu vaccine administered on or about October 20, 2014, as alleged by petitioner in a petition for vaccine compensation filed on or about April 13, 2016, in the United States Court of Federal Claims as petition No. 16-470V.

15. If petitioner should die prior to entry of judgment, this agreement shall be voidable upon proper notice to the Court on behalf of either or both of the parties.

16. If the special master fails to issue a decision in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation or if the Court of Federal Claims fails to enter judgment in conformity with a decision that is in complete conformity with the terms of this Stipulation, then the parties' settlement and this Stipulation shall be voidable at the sole discretion of either party.

17. This Stipulation expresses a full and complete negotiated settlement of liability and damages claimed under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, except as otherwise

noted in paragraph 10 above. There is absolutely no agreement on the part of the parties hereto to make any payment or to do any act or thing other than is herein expressly stated and clearly agreed to. The parties further agree and understand that the award described in this Stipulation may reflect a compromise of the parties' respective positions as to liability and/or amount of damages, and further, that a change in the nature of the injury or condition or in the items of compensation sought, is not grounds to modify or revise this agreement.

18. All rights and obligations of petitioner hereunder shall apply equally to petitioner's heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and/or assigns.

END OF STIPULATION

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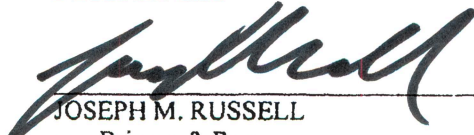
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Respectfully submitted,

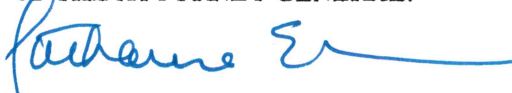
PETITIONER:


REBECCA S. MELGARES

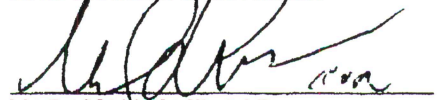
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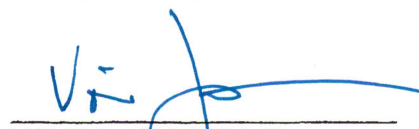
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Dated: 9/16/16